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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In the Application of )

for SIGNING AND SIGNATURE CHECKING )  
OF MESSAGES )

Serial No: National Stage Entry of International ) Our Docket No: 6400-11WOUS  
Application No. PCT/DE00/01086 filed April 7, 2000 )

Filed: Simultaneously herewith )

Hartford, Connecticut, December 21, 2000

**Box PCT**

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D. C. 20231

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

SIR:

Concurrently with the entry of the above-identified international application into  
the U.S. National Stage, please amend it as follows:

In the Specification (of the English Translation of the Application)

Page 1, line 3, delete the sub-heading "Technical field" and substitute --FIELD  
OF THE INVENTION--.

Page 1, line 8, delete the sub-heading "Prior art" and substitute --  
BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--.

Page 2, line 15, delete the sub-heading "Description of the invention" and  
substitute --SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--.